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Developments in the Soviet Party Congress

Composition of Party Presidium and Secretariat Announced: Announcement has just been made of the October 16th plenary meeting of the new Central Committee at which a Presidium of 25 full members and 11 alternate members was elected to replace the old Politburo and Orgburo. Of the 11 full members of the Politburo nine members were re-elected as full members of the Presidium, with one, A. M. Kossygin, demoted to an alternate member, and one, A. A. Andreyev dropped entirely, although he remained on the Central Committee. N. M. Shvernik, once an alternate member of the Politburo was elevated to full membership in the new body. Of the remaining full members of the Presidium, two were formerly in the Secretariat, three are Deputy Ministers of the Council of Ministers, two represent mass organizations (the Trade Unions and Komsomol), seven are party officials, and one is from the Academy of Sciences. Of the eleven alternate members, four are key ministers and one a former minister, five are party officials, and one is from the Academy of Sciences.

Announcement was also made of the election of the new Secretariat, which now consists of ten members. The five previous members of the Secretariat are represented, as well as three regional party secretaries, one member of the apparatus of the Secretariat, and the first secretary of the Komsomol.

Comment: Although the large size of the Presidium makes it appear on the surface as an unwieldy policy making body, the inclusion of all the Deputy Chairmen of the Council of Ministers, with the exception of A. A. Andreyev, as well as other key economic specialists, suggests that many of the new members are being brought closer to the center of power where they will probably be used more in an advisory or executive capacity rather than in the formulation of policy. The inclusion of regional and provincial party secretaries is in line with the trend earlier noted in the selection of Central Committee members and further underlines the important place which they hold in Soviet affairs.

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